

**A DEVELOPMENT OF DATABASE DRIVEN
INVENTORY MANAGEMENT FOR SAUDI SMALL
ENTERPRISES**

ALQAHTANI, EBTISAM YOUSEF

**UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2011**

A Development of Database Driven Inventory Management for Saudi Small Enterprises

**A Project submitted to Dean of Awang Had Salleh Graduate School
of Arts and Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree Master
(Information and Communication Technology),
Universiti Utara Malaysia**

By

Alqahtani, Ebtisam Yousef (806943)

© Alqahtani,Ebtisam Yousef , 2011. All rights reserved.

Prof Madya Hatim B Mohamad Tahir



KOLEJ SASTERA DAN SAINS
(College of Arts and Sciences)
Universiti Utara Malaysia

PERAKUAN KERJA KERTAS PROJEK
(Certificate of Project Paper)

Saya, yang bertandatangan, memperakukan bahawa
(I, the undersigned, certifies that)

ALQAHTANI, EBTISAM YOUSEF K
(806943)

calon untuk Ijazah
(candidate for the degree of) **MSc. (Information Communication Technology)**

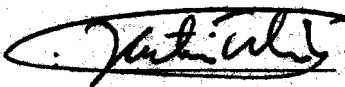
telah mengemukakan kertas projek yang bertajuk
(has presented his/her project of the following title)

A DEVELOPMENT OF DATABASE DRIVEN INVENTORY
MANAGEMENT FOR SAUDI SMALL ENTERPRISES

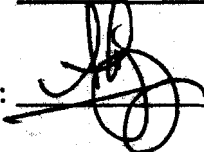
seperti yang tercatat di muka surat tajuk dan kulit kertas projek
(as it appears on the title page and front cover of project)

bahawa kertas projek tersebut boleh diterima dari segi bentuk serta kandungan
dan meliputi bidang ilmu dengan memuaskan.
(that this project is in acceptable form and content, and that a satisfactory
knowledge of the field is covered by the project).

Nama Penyelia
(Name of Supervisor) : **ASSOC. PROF. HATIM MOHAMAD TAHIR**

Tandatangan
(Signature) :  Tarikh (Date) : 12/6/11

Nama Penilai
(Name of Evaluator) : **MR. ALI YUSNY DAUD**

Tandatangan
(Signature) :  Tarikh (Date) : 3/7/2011

PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this project of the requirements for a Master of Science in Information and Communication Technology (MSc. IT) from Universiti Utara Malaysia, I agree that the University library may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying of this project paper in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by my supervisor or in their absence, by the Dean of Graduate School. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this project or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to Universiti Utara Malaysia for any scholarly use which may be made of any material from my project paper.

Request for permission to copy or make other use of materials in this project, in whole or in part, should be addressed to:

Dean of Awang Had Salleh Graduate School

Universiti Utara Malaysia

06010 Sintok

Kedah Darul Aman

Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, the changing in business operations among customers is facing huge challenges due to the new competition of adopting technology by businesses today. Most of these challenges can be found among the Saudi Small Enterprise companies (SSEs), which reflects the needs of developing a suitable system for managing and optimizing the business activities in these companies. A number of difficulties were reported during the process of inventory management, which recognized to be one of the most critical operations for any SSEs. Hence, integrating new technology could help to overcome the SSEs difficulties in performing and managing its operations in reliable way. Meanwhile, this research aimed to develop an inventory management system for simplifying and managing SSEs operations in a flexible way based on the utilization of multi agent interface that could add extra advantages in operating the business deals over the internet.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise to Allah for his guidance and blessing for giving me the strength and perseverance to complete this project. I would foremost like to thank my parents, for providing me with the opportunity to pursue my goals and for their love and affection, which has helped me through the most trying times. Equal gratitude goes out to my siblings and brothers. I would like to thank my supervisor: **“Prof Madya Hatim B Mohamad Tahir”** for his guidance and constant motivation that has enabled me to complete my project work. Moreover, I would also like to thank him for the opportunities that he has made available to me.

Alqahtani, Ebtisam Yousef/ May 15, 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Num

PERMISSION TO USE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF OBSERVATION	ix

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Problem Statement	4
1.2 Research Question	5
1.3 Objectives	6
1.4 Significance of the Study	6
1.5 Research Scope	6
1.6 Organization of the Thesis	7

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Web Architecture	9
2.2.1 Features of the web Applications	11
2.3 Impact of ICT on Business	12
2.4 Enterprise Resource Planning	13
2.5 Inventory Management	17
2.6 Web based Technology	21
2.7 Related Work	22
2.8 Summary	27

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28
3.1 Introduction	28
3.2 Awareness of Problem	29

3.3 Suggestion	30
3.3.1 Data Preprocessing	31
3.3.2 Data Cleaning	32
3.3.3 User Identification	32
3.3.4 Session Identification	32
3.3.5 Data Filtering	32
3.4 Development	33
3.4.1 Prototype Development	34
3.4.2 Adopted Tools	36
3.5 Evaluation	36
3.6 Conclusion	36
3.7 Summary	37

CHAPTER FOUR

SYSTEM DESIGN AND RESULT	38
4.1 Introduction	38
4.2 Storyboard Design	38
4.3 List of Requirements	39
4.3.1 Functional Requirements	40
4.3.2 Non functional Requirements	41
4.4 UML	42
4.4.1 Introduction	42
4.4.2 Use Case Diagram	42
4.4.3 Sequence Diagram	44
4.4.3.1 Login Sequence Diagram	44
4.4.3.2 Register Sequence Diagram	46
4.4.3.3 Order Sequence Diagram	47
4.4.3.4 Manage Inventory Sequence Diagram	48
4.4.3.5 Multi Agent Interface (MAI) Sequence Diagram	49
4.4.4 Use Case Specification	50
4.4.4.1 Login Case Specification	50
4.4.4.2 Register Case Specification	50
4.4.4.3 Order Case Specification	51
4.4.4.4 Manage Inventory case Specification	51
4.4.4.5 Multi Agent Inventory Case Specification	52

4.5 Coding	52
4.6 Test	53
4.6.1 Page Testing	53
4.6.2 Content Testing	56
4.6.2.1 Diagnosis	56
4.6.2.1.1 Object Size Totals	57
4.6.2.1.2 Download Times	57
4.6.2.1.3 Download Software	58
4.7 GUI of DDIS	59
4.7.1 Navigating the Website	59
4.7.1.1 DDIS Home Page	60
4.7.2.2 Order Page	61
4.7.3 User Profile Page	62
4.7.4 Registration Page	62
4.7.5 MAI page	63
4.8 Summary	64

CHAPTER FIVE

OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION	65
5.1 System Evaluation	65
5.2 Data Analysis Techniques	65
5.3 Respondents Background	66
5.4 Result	67
5.5 Summary	69

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION	70
6.1 Recommendation	71
6.2 Contribution of Study	71
6.3 Future Work	72
REFERENCES	73
Appendix A	77
Appendix B	81

LIST OF FIGURES

	<i>Page Num</i>
Figure 1.1: Architecture of the Study	7
Figure 2.1: Web architecture	10
Figure 2.2: Inventory Management System Configuration	12
Figure 2.3.: Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP, 2010)	14
Figure 2.4: Chronos eStockCard System (Chronos, 2010)	23
Figure 2.5: Inventoria Professional Inventory Software (Inventoria, 2010)	24
Figure 2.6: Inventory Maintained in the E-Soft ERP System (E-Soft, 2010)	24
Figure 2.7: Inventory Pro System (CISS, 2011)	25
Figure 2.8: Process of MAS over Cyber Space	26
Figure 3.1: Major Phases in Design Cycle (Vaishnavi & Kuechler, 2004)	29
Figure 3.2: System Process	31
Figure 3.3: Data preprocessing component	31
Figure 3.4: Main Steps in Prototyping (Laudon & Laudon, 2000)	35
Figure 4.1: DDIS Use Case Diagram	44
Figure 4.2: Login Sequence Diagram	45
Figure 4.3: Register Sequence Diagram	46
Figure 4.4: Order Sequence Diagram	47
Figure 4.5: Manage Inventory Sequence Diagram	48
Figure 4.6: MAI Sequence Diagram	49
Figure 4.7: Content test Flow	58
Figure 4.8: DDIS Home Page	60
Figure 4.9: DDIS Login Page	60
Figure 4.10: DDIS Order Page	61
Figure 4.11: DDIS User Page	62
Figure 4.12: Registration Page	62
Figure 4.13: DDIS Selling Interface	63
Figure 4.14: DDIS Customer Chart Interface	63
Figure 4.15: DDIS User Actions Interface	64

LIST OF TABLES

Page Num

Table 3.1: Development Tools	36
Table 4.1 Functional Requirement	40
Table 4.2 Non-Functional Requirements	41
Table 4.3: Login Use Case	50
Table 4.4: Register Use Case	50
Table 4.5: Order Use Case	51
Table 4.6: Manage Inventory Use Case	51
Table 4.7: Multi Agent Interface (MAI) Use Case	52
Table 5.1: The Distribution of Respondents by Age Groups	66
Table 5.2: The Distribution of Participants by Experience Groups	66
Table 5.3: The Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education	67
Table 5.4: Descriptive Statistics for Usefulness & Ease of Use	67

LIST OF OBSERVATION

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ERP	Enterprise Resource
MPA	Master Production Schedule
RCCP	Rough Cut Capacity Planning
MRP-I	Material Requirement Planning
CRP	Capacity Requirement Planning
SCM	Supply Chain Planning
MES	Manufacturing Execution System
EOQ	Economic Order Quantity
RP	Reorder Point
JIT	Just In Time
DCOM	Distributed Component Object Model
IIOP	Internet Inter-Orb Protocol
CISS	Computerized Inventory System Specialists
IIMS	Integrated Inventory Management System
AOM	Aspect Oriented Modeling
RE	Requirement Engineering
DDIS	Development Database Inventory For Saudi
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter briefly elaborates the main idea of this research, providing an answer of the question why the study is conducted and what is the main element involved in the study. The first sub-topic describes the overall idea in this study through the introduction and motivation that lead to the implementation of the whole research. In addition, the problem statement, objectives, significance and scope of the study were followed towards the research topic. The last sub-topic amplifies the way this research is organized.

1.0 Introduction

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been changing the way how things are done by people irrespective of age, gender or social status. These changes include everything starting from day to day things such as how people communicate with each other, how students study to how businesses are carried out (Adams, 1998; Noudoostbeni, Yasin, & Jenatabadi, 2009).

With the change of customers' preferences, break of geographical and political barriers to business, development and proliferation of technology, changes in the laws protecting the customer interests and other changing factors in the external environment and the internal environment changes like educated and skilled labor, demands on limited capital put businesses under great pressure. The amount and the nature of pressure felt by businesses depends on various factors like the type of business, size of business, nature of market etc., (Scheer & Habermann, 2000; Umble, Haft, & Umble, 2003). Businesses use different strategies to cope with these pressures. Some businesses adapt to the changing environments

The contents of
the thesis is for
internal user
only

References

- Adams, P. (1998). Network topologies and virtual place. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 88(1), 88-106.
- Ahin, M., & Pasaoglu Hamsioglu, D. (2008). ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING: COMPARISON IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES OF TWO COMPANIES. *Lex ET Scientia International Journal (LESIJ)*(XV-2), 215.
- Armstrong, E., Ball, J., Bodoff, S., Carson, D., Evans, I., Green, D., et al. (2003). The J2EE 1.4 tutorial. *Sun Microsystems*.
- Barroso, L., Dean, J., & Holzle, U. (2003). Web search for a planet: The Google cluster architecture. *IEEE micro*, 23(2), 22-28.
- Beenish, A., & Saleem, G. (2008). *AcceleratedSAP: Study Review of ERP Implementation Methodologies*. Unpublished manuscript, Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Bergiel, B., Walters C., and Authement, J., (2009). A Neglected Environment: Problems Faced by Small Business. from <http://www.sbaer.uca.edu/research/ssbia/2009/PDF/05.pdf> - Accessed on 25/10/2010
- Bhatti, T. (2005). *Critical Success Factors for the Implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP): Empirical Validation*. Paper presented at the Critical Success Factors for the Implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP): Empirical Validation, US.
- Blinder, A., & Maccini, L. (1991). Taking stock: A critical assessment of recent research on inventories. *The journal of economic perspectives*, 5(1), 73-96.
- Booth, D., Haas, H., McCabe, F., Newcomer, E., Champion, M., Ferris, C., et al. (2004). Web services architecture. *W3C Working Group Note*, 11, 2005-2001.
- Buhr, R. (2002). Use case maps as architectural entities for complex systems. *Software Engineering, IEEE Transactions on*, 24(12), 1131-1155.
- Cecchetti, S., Kashyap, A., & Wilcox, D. (1997). Interactions between the seasonal and business cycles in production and inventories. *The American Economic Review*, 884-892.
- Chen, C., Law, C., & Yang, S. (2009). Managing ERP implementation failure: A project management perspective. *Engineering Management, IEEE Transactions on*, 56(1), 157-170.
- Chen, H., & Chang, C. (2009). IIMS: an integrated inventory management system based on software agent. *International Journal of Business Information Systems*, 4(1), 105-124.
- Cheng, B. H. C., & Atlee, J. M. (2007). *Research directions in requirements engineering*. Paper presented at the Conference on Future of Software Engineering, Minneapolis, MN
- Cheng, D., Deng, F., & Li, H. (2006). *Critical factors for successful implementation of ERP in China*. Paper presented at the International Conference on e-Business Engineering Shanghai, China.
- Chronos. (2010). Chronos eStockcard Inventory Management System Web Site. Retrieved 1.04.2010, 2010, from <http://www.estockcard.com/>
- CISS. (2011). CISS inventory Pro Retrieved 43.08.2010, 2011, from http://www.cissltd.com/inventory_pro.asp
- Curbera, F., Leymann, F., Storey, T., Ferguson, D., & Weerawarana, S. (2005). *Web Services Platform Architecture: SOAP, WSDL, WS-Policy, WS-Addressing, WS-BPEL, WS-Reliable Messaging and More*: Prentice Hall PTR.

- Daneva, M. (2003). *Six Degrees of Success or Failure in ERP Requirements Engineering: Experiences with the ASAP Process*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Requirements Engineering Monterey Bay, USA.
- Daneva, M. (2007). *Understanding Success and Failure Profiles of ERP Requirements Engineering: an Empirical Study*. Paper presented at the Conference on Software Engineering and Advanced Applications Luebeck, Germany.
- Daneva, M., & Wieringa, R. (2005). *Requirements engineering for cross-organizational ERP implementation undocumented assumptions and potential mismatches*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Requirements Engineering USA.
- Daneva, M., & Wieringa, R. (2006). *A coordination complexity model to support requirements engineering for cross-organizational ERP*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Requirements Engineering, Paul, MN, USA.
- De Landtsheer, R., Letier, E., & Van Lamsweerde, A. (2004). Deriving tabular event-based specifications from goal-oriented requirements models. *Requirements Engineering*, 9(2), 104-120.
- de Vries, J. (2005). The complex relationship between inventory control and organisational setting: theory and practice. *International journal of production economics*, 93, 273-284.
- Dexter, F. (1999). Design of appointment systems for preanesthesia evaluation clinics to minimize patient waiting times: a review of computer simulation and patient survey studies. *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, 89(4), 925.
- E-Soft. (2010). Everise Technology Sdn. Bhd. Retrieved 26.08.2009, 2010, from <http://www.e-soft.com.my/index.html>
- Ellis, A., Wagner, E., & Longmire, W. (2009). *Managing Web-based training: How to keep your program on track and make it successful*: Amer Society for Training &.
- Erl, T. (2005). *Service-oriented architecture: concepts, technology, and design*: Prentice Hall PTR Upper Saddle River, NJ, USA.
- ERP. (2010). Enterprise Resource Planning. from <http://www.getfast.co.uk/erp.aspx>
- Gellersen, H., & Gaedke, M. (2002). Object-oriented Web application development. *Internet Computing, IEEE*, 3(1), 60-68.
- Gilmore, S., & Tribastone, M. (2006). Evaluating the scalability of a web service-based distributed e-learning and course management system. *Web Services and Formal Methods*, 214-226.
- Gottschalk, K., Graham, S., Kreger, H., & Snell, J. (2010). Introduction to Web services architecture. *IBM systems journal*, 41(2), 170-177.
- Holland, C., & Light, B. (2002). A critical success factors model for ERP implementation. *Software, IEEE*, 16(3), 30-36.
- iBlogger. (2010). Typical Problems faced by Small Businesses. from <http://indianblogger.com/typical-problems-faced-by-small-businesses/> - Accessed on 25/10/2010
- Inventoria. (2010). Inventoria Professional Inventory Software Retrieved 3.07.2009, 2010, from <http://www.nclsoftware.com/inventory/index.html>
- Jarrar, Y., Al-Mudimigh, A., & Zairi, M. (2002). *ERP implementation critical success factors-the role and impact of business process management*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 2000 IEEE International Conference on Management of Innovation and Technology European Centre for Total Quality Manage., Bradford Univ.

- Khan, A., & Thomas, J. (2007). Inventories and the business cycle: An equilibrium analysis of (S, s) policies. *The American Economic Review*, 97(4), 1165-1188.
- Kwon, Y., Balazinska, M., & Greenberg, A. (2008). Fault-tolerant stream processing using a distributed, replicated file system. *Proceedings of the VLDB Endowment*, 1(1), 574-585.
- Laudon, K., & Laudon, J. (2000). Management information systems: organization and technology in the networked enterprise. 4(2), 23-28.
- Laukkanen, S., Sarpola, S., & Hallikainen, P. (2005). *ERP System Adoption-Does the Size Matter?* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 38th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences Honolulu, HI, USA.
- Liang, H., Saraf, N., Hu, Q., & Xue, Y. (2007). Assimilation of enterprise systems: The effect of institutional pressures and the mediating role of top management. *Management Information Systems Quarterly*, 31(1), 6.
- Lieberman, M., Helper, S., & Demeester, L. (1999). The empirical determinants of inventory levels in high-volume manufacturing. *Production and operations management*, 8(1), 44-55.
- Ma, L., & Tian, J. (2003). Analyzing errors and referral pairs to characterize common problems and improve web reliability. *Web Engineering*, 179-187.
- Maranga, M. (2010). from http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Mercy_Maranga - Accessed on 25/10/2010.
- Mellor, S. J., & Balcer, M. (2002). *Executable UML: A foundation for model-driven architectures*: Addison-Wesley Longman Publishing Co., Inc. Boston, MA, USA.
- Menasce, D. (2004). Composing web services: A QoS view. *Internet Computing, IEEE*, 8(6), 88-90.
- Murthy, K., Kadur, R., & Nagaraju, N. (2002). *Strategic business management in a competitive environment*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 1994 IEEE International Engineering Management Conference 'Management in Transition: Engineering a Changing World'. , Dayton North, OH , USA.
- Murugesan, S., Deshpande, Y., Hansen, S., & Ginige, A. (2001). Web engineering: A new discipline for development of web-based systems. *Web Engineering*, 3-13.
- Nielsen, J., & Landauer, T. (1993). *A mathematical model of the finding of usability problems*. Paper presented at the on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- Noudoostbeni, A., Yasin, N., & Jenatabadi, H. (2009). *To Investigate the Success and Failure Factors of ERP Implementation within Malaysian Small and Medium Enterprises*. Paper presented at the Conference on Information Management and Engineering Malaya, Kuala Lumpur
- Pairat, R., & Jungthirapanich, C. (2005). *A chronological review of ERP research: an analysis of ERP inception, evolution, and direction*. Paper presented at the US, Conference on Engineering Management
- Paolucci, M., Revetria, R., & Tonelli, F. (2007). An Agent-based System for Sales and Operations Planning in Manufacturing Supply Chains. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SYSTEMS APPLICATIONS, ENGINEERING & DEVELOPMENT*, 1(4), 155-163.
- Phalp, K. T., Vincent, J., & Cox, K. (2007). Improving the quality of use case descriptions: empirical assessment of writing guidelines. *Software Quality Journal*, 15(4), 383-399.
- Rajeev, N. (2009). *Inventory management performance in Indian machine tool SMEs: What factors do influence them?* Paper presented at the ternational Conference on Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management Singapore.

- Scheer, A., & Habermann, F. (2000). Enterprise resource planning: making ERP a success. *Communications of the ACM*, 43(4), 57-61.
- Schuchardt, K., Didier, B., & Black, G. (2002). Ecce-a problem-solving environment's evolution toward Grid services and a Web architecture. *Concurrency and computation: practice and experience*, 14(13-15), 1221-1239.
- Shen, W., & Liu, S. (2003). Formalization, testing and execution of a use case diagram. *Formal Methods and Software Engineering*, 68-85.
- Signorile, R. (2002). Simulation of a multiagent system for retail inventory control: A case study. *Simulation*, 78(5), 304.
- Singla, A. (2008). Impact of ERP Systems on Small and Mid Sized Public Sector Enterprises. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology*, 4(2), 119-131.
- Sprague, L., & Wacker, J. (1996). Macroeconomic analyses of inventories: learning from practice* 1. *International journal of production economics*, 45(1-3), 231-237.
- Umble, E., Haft, R., & Umble, M. (2003). Enterprise resource planning: Implementation procedures and critical success factors. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 146(2), 241-257.
- Vaishnavi, V., & Kuechler, W. (2004). Design research in information systems. *January*, 20, 2004.
- Vastag, G., & Clay Whybark, D. (2005). Inventory management: Is there a knock-on effect? *International journal of production economics*, 93, 129-138.
- Wright, S., & Wright, A. (2002). Information system assurance for enterprise resource planning systems: unique risk considerations. *Journal of Information Systems*, 16(1), 99-113.
- Xu, L., Yu, W., Lim, R., & Hock, L. (2010). *A methodology for successful implementation of ERP in smaller companies*. Paper presented at the Qingdao, Shandong, China, Conference on Service Operations and Logistics and Informatics